

REMARKS

Applicant has amended claims 1, 4-5, 8, 10, 18, 19, 21-23, and canceled claim 9. Thus, claims 1-8, 10-19, and 21-23 are presented for examination. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Response to Objections to the Drawings:

Figure 2 stands objected to for failing to identify flange 41. Applicant has amended figure 2 located on drawing sheet 2 of 5 to identify flange 41, as suggested by Examiner. Applicant has included a replacement drawing sheet 2 of 5. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner reconsider the objection to the drawing.

Response to Objections to the Claims:

Claims 5, 18, and 23 stand objected to due to of informalities. Applicant has amended claims 5, 18, and 23 as suggested by Examiner. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the objections to the claims.

Response to rejections under Section 103

Claims 1, 19, and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), the Examiner contending that these claims are obvious over Zarzalis et al. (US 5,765,376) in view of Hess (US 3,563,683) or Sakurai et al. (US 4,216,908). Claims 1-3, 5-8, 12, 18, 19, 22, and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), the Examiner contending the these claims are unpatentable over Sato et al. (US 3,831,854) or Sakurai et al. (US 4,216,908). Examiner also contends that claims 11 and 13 are unpatentable over Sato et al. (US 3,831,854) in view of Johnson (US 5,581,999) and stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

In the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that dependent claim 9 contained patentable subject matter and would be allowed if rewritten to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 18, and 19 to include the limitations of dependent claim 9 but not of the intervening claims. Applicant respectfully submits that adding the limitation of claim 9, a sealing element that can be disposed between a mounting flange and a mounting area of the inlet opening, to independent claims 1, 18, and 19

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renders the claims patentable. In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 18, and 19 are patentable, as well as claims 2-8, 10-17, and 21-23, which depend from claim 1, 18, or 19. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the Section 103 rejection is respectfully requested.

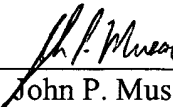
Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection and objections set forth in the outstanding Office Action are inapplicable to the present claims. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider the rejection and objections and timely pass the application to allowance. Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this paper. The commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees due in connection with this paper, including the fees specified in 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 (c), 1.17(a)(1) and 1.20(d) for total independent claims in excess of 3, or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 19-2179.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____



John P. Musone
Registration No. 44,961
(407) 736-6449

Siemens Corporation
Intellectual Property Department
170 Wood Avenue South
Iselin, New Jersey 08830